



Christmas Bells  
and other Poems

BY

HENRY MARTYN BRIGHAM

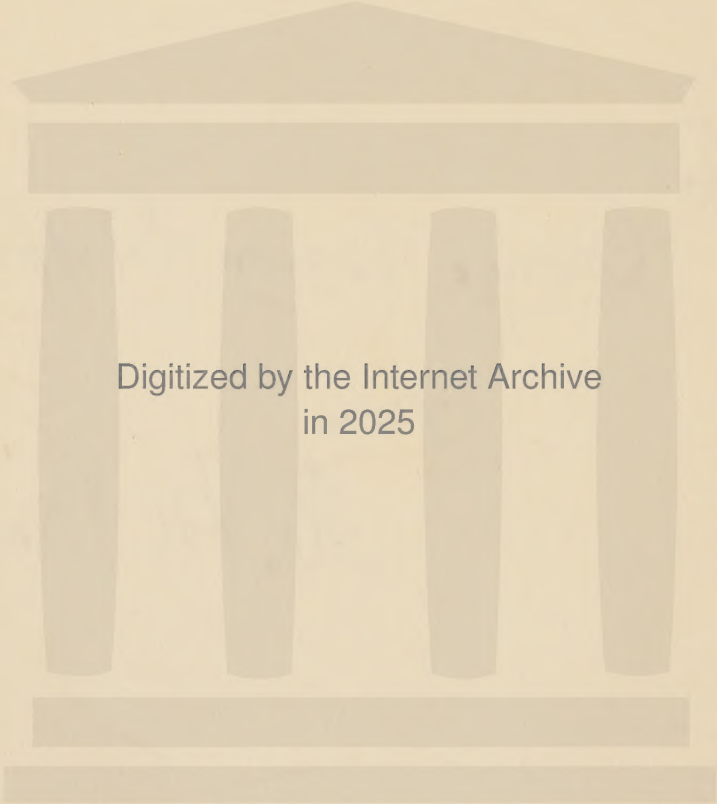


privately ptd.  
Signed

To George Vernon Skeffred

From

H. M. Bingham



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2025



# Christmas Bells

and other Poems



BY

HENRY MARTYN BRIGHAM



TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY DEAR SON  
HARRY WHITING BRIGHAM  
WHO GAVE HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY  
IN THE WORLD WAR  
THESE VERSES ARE DEDICATED.

COPYRIGHT 1927

by

HENRY MARTYN BRIGHAM

## Christmas Bells



ING, ring ye Christmas Bells,  
Peace, Good Will, your music tells,  
For on this Glorious Christmas morn,  
Of Virgin Mary, Christ was born.

Tell, tell how from afar,  
Their only guide a music star,  
The wise men came with incense sweet  
And gifts to lay at His dear feet.

Tell, tell that it was He,  
Whose tender touch made blind men see,  
Who healed the sick. Who raised the dead,  
Yet knew not where to lay His head,

Tell, tell the truths He spake,  
And what He suffered for our sake,  
And how His precious life He gave,  
Upon the cross our souls to save.

Ring, ring ye Christmas Bells,  
Peace, Good Will, your music tells,  
For on this Glorious Christmas morn,  
Of Virgin Mary, Christ was born

## The Goddess of Spring



WAKE! I come! I am goddess of spring,  
And all my treasures and magic I bring;  
I quicken the flowers, the trees, the grass,  
I wake all the lands o'er which I pass.

You may follow my footsteps over the hills,  
Where I melt the snows and release the rills,  
I haste through the forest and in my train  
Laurel and dogwood blossom again.

No footfall of fairy so light as my own  
The crocuses bloom ere my fleet feet have flown  
Like a bride in her splendor adorned for the rite  
The orchards are clothed in their garlands of white.

I gather my clouds from the misty main  
And scatter my showers o'er the thirsty plain,  
Till a wealth of flowers and meadows sweet  
Mark every step of my wandering feet.

The red deer roams through the forest free,  
The grey geese call as they follow me,  
The swallows and blue birds obey my call,  
The sparrows are resting on the vineclad wall.

The blackbird sings from the clear blue sky  
His sweetest songs as I hurry by  
And my heralds the robins merrily sing,  
"Hail! All hail to the goddess of spring!"

I pause but a moment and youth is aglow,  
All eager to follow wherever I go, -  
With music and laughter they dance in my train  
For love is supreme in my green domain.

## Cloue Valley



NOT far away from our own New York,  
With all its worry and care and work,  
Are rock and gulley and wood and hill,  
And stream and valley and creaking mill,  
There ruffed grouse drum and wild duck swing,  
Far over head with beating wing,  
And bright trout dart and leap and play,  
In shady pools at close of day.  
There flows a spring so deep and cold,  
That all who drink says the legend old,  
Shall dream again those sweet, sweet joys,  
Forgotten all since we were boys,  
Of truant hour, neglected book,  
Of rod and gun and baited hook,  
Of stolen fruit and schoolboy prank,  
And pirate lair on shady bank.

There when the day is spent and gone,  
We wander clubward one by one  
And gather in our cheerful hall;  
Good fellows one, good fellows all;  
And when the evening meal is o'er,  
And gathered round the fire once more,  
We watch the shadows flit and fall  
And trace weird fancies on the wall.  
And chat and smoke and have our say  
About the fortunes of the day  
Then come the tales of other days  
Of huntercraft and wildwood ways  
Of moose and elk, of deer and bear  
Of duck and grouse, of fox and hare,  
Of trout and bass and deeds of might  
Until the fire's fast fading light  
So gently says, Good night, Good night.

## The Brook



H! for a day in early May  
Beside the rushing brook,  
With rod and reel, a willow creel  
And gaily feathered hook.

Each foam fleck'd pool is deep and cool,  
The rapids leap and play,  
And every fall has a merry call  
For hearts in tune with May.

In meadows wide the brook beside  
Are dandelions bold,  
A countless host that proudly boast  
Their wealth of yellow gold.

A wilderness of watercress  
And yellow cowslips grow,  
Where in and out it winds about  
And scarcely seems to flow.

Along each bank the grass is rank  
And trembling wind-flow'rs bow  
Their timid heads o'er mossy beds,  
Where yesterday was snow.

Dull insects sing with filmy wing  
A drowsy, sleepy song,  
And laden feet with honey sweet,  
Are mingled with the throng.

With vain display of plumage gay  
That charms his mate and me,  
The blackbird soars and poising pours  
A flood of melody.

The robin's song is sweet and strong,  
The blue-birds flitting near,  
Repeat their vows from budding boughs,  
For mating time is here.

Each sheltered place reveals the face  
Of some sweet friendly flower,  
And woodland song the whole day long,  
Beguiles each happy hour.

As I idly dream beside the stream  
And cast my feathered fly  
Where rapids rush past rock and bush  
And swirling eddies die.

I do not wish for record fish  
To test and prove my art,  
But just a day in early May  
So near to nature's heart.

## The Lure of the River



FROM Clove's fair hills, where green trees grow,  
Unnumbered springs and brooklets flow,  
Nor stay, nor rest, till far below,  
They join the restless river.

Though slender grasses idly sway  
And bid the sparkling waters stay,  
They only linger on their way  
To join the restless river.

Mid cresses green and waters hide,  
When yellow cowslips bid them bide,  
Yet slowly onward flows the tide  
To join the restless river.

Though slender ferns about their source  
May stay the waters in their course,  
They still obey the unseen force  
That lures them to the river.

The spreading alders shyly say:  
“With timid kiss, I bid you stay,”  
And yet the waters glide away  
To join the restless river.

Though rushes whisper: “Abide, Abide,”  
And seem to stay the sluggish tide,  
Yet slowly on the waters glide  
To join the restless river.

At early dawn the timid doe  
Is startled by their noisy flow,  
Yet undisturbed the waters go  
To join the restless river.

Though barefoot children, one by one  
Oft bid the waters join their fun,  
They heed them not, but faster run  
To join the restless river.

Oh ! Stay and tell me foolish rills,  
Why do you leave these cool green hills,  
And toil and labor through the mills  
To join the restless river ?

## The Broadwater



SEE thy waters wide  
Where ebbs and flows the tide,  
The marshes vast and low  
O'er which thy waters flow  
At Luna's call.

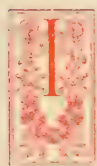
When evening shadows fall  
I hear the marsh hen's call,  
And see the mist steal o'er  
The water marsh and shore  
Of Old Virginia.

The curlews plaintive cry,  
Sweet flute note from the sky,  
The sea-gulls mocking scream,  
Come to me when I dream  
Of Old Virginia.

I hear the bird songs sweet;  
Again beneath my feet  
Are flowers pink and fair;  
I scent the strong salt air  
Of Old Virginia.

I long to stand once more  
Upon thy marshy shore,  
To clasp again each hand  
In that happy care-free land  
Of Old Virginia.

## May



HEAR the hum of insects and the  
songs of birds,

I scent the fresh moist earth, the growing  
grass, the leaves, the flowers,

I feel the warm damp breath of May upon  
my cheek,

I see the stream, the wood, the hill, the sky  
and the changing clouds;

All these are mine and no man hath  
greater riches.


## The Cool Green Wood



WHEN weary of labor and things that are vain,  
Pack up your duffle and take the first train,  
Right into the heart of the cool, green wood,  
Where life is so simple and the grub tastes  
so good;

Where the breath of the balsam is sweet on the air  
And life is a blessing instead of a care;  
Where your only possessions are stored in your pack,  
Your rifle, canoe and the clothes on your back;  
Where no one is worried by losses or gain,  
'Way back in the wood in the far State of Maine.

## Austin Town

 HE peaceful village of Austin lay,  
In its quiet valley that autumn day,  
All unconcerned by the startling fact,  
That the dam above had slipped and cracked,  
Or by the pulp logs piled below,  
God help the town if the dam should go !  
And merchants bargained and bought and sold,  
With never a doubt that the dam would hold,  
And women laughed and children played,  
And none of the villagers were afraid.


For despite alarms the dam has stood  
The test of time and springtime flood,  
And the engineer who built it said,  
"That dam will stand when you all are dead."  
Then a whistle shrieked and the warning shout  
Rang through the valley "The dam's gone out!"  
"Fly to the hills! Save who can!"  
And men and women and children ran  
In wild confusion---mad with fear  
Of the awful doom that loomed so near,  
For a wall of water was rolling down  
That peaceful valley into Austin town,  
And licking it clean like the hungry tongue  
Of a famished wolf, who must feed her young;  
While over it all the flood's foul breath  
Hung like a pall, 'twas the angel of death.

And woe to the child or woman or man  
Who stayed their flight or feebly ran,  
For the brutal pulp logs beat them down,  
Right in the streets of Austin town,  
And buildings swayed and crashed and fell,  
Till Austin town was the pit of hell.  
In the peaceful valley of Austin town,  
Fourscore were dead when the flood went down,  
And vanished and gone was Austin town.  
Oh! woe to the engineer who said  
“That dam will stand when you all are dead.”




AY the New Year bring to you  
Good Health and Wealth;  
Of worldly goods enough to be  
Secure from want and penury;  
Of friends, not scores, but just a few  
Loyal Friends, Old Friends who cherish you.

## Rogues and Poets

HE greatest rogues are seldom hung,  
The sweetest songs are oft' unsung  
Because the wisest in each trade,  
Both rogue and poet are afraid  
To steal or sing, lest critics may  
Each errant rogue or poet slay,  
So both most carefully conceal  
Their tendencies to sing or steal,  
Until desire becomes so strong,  
They either steal or burst in song.

## Banks vs. Banks

OR four long years and maybe more,  
Poor Banks knocked loud at Justice's door  
And then he died and went to heaven,  
'Twas long ago, 'twas seventy seven.

But still the case was carried on  
By his daughter and his son  
And lawyers came and lawyers went  
Till Banks' Estate was nearly spent.

Then counsel came, excuse their haste,  
To ask the court to stay the waste,  
But one was unprepared he said  
Because his witnesses were dead.

The other said that he must be  
Courteous, kind and neighborly  
And so his case is pending still  
And some folks think it always will.

But I'm inclined to think perhaps,  
That when those crafty legal chaps  
Have squandered all of Banks' Estate,  
That case of Banks' will meet his fate.

## Dear Little Bird



DEAR little bird, build your nest in my tree  
For your matin songs bring joy to me  
And your low soft notes when the light  
grows dim,  
To my weary soul are a vesper hymn.

## Clove Valley



HERE is something in Clove Valley,  
Perhaps it's in the air,  
That makes us all feel kinder,  
That drives away our care.

There is something in Clove Valley  
That I cannot quite explain,  
It's a sort of joyous freedom  
That makes us young again.

There is something in Clove Valley,  
I'm sure it's in its heart,  
That kindles those rare friendships  
Not even death can part.









\*P2-AWR-406\*

**\*P2-AWR-406\***